



SELECTED REPORT TITLES ON BILINGUAL PROFICIENCY

Year	Topic	File #	Pages	Chart
2022				
Aug 15, 22	Overcoming the English and Spanish Accents, Part I: The Intervocalic Consonant	100268	1	0
	<p>In this report, we call attention to a common source of the characteristic accent of native English and Spanish speakers who learned the other language in school. The source is a misunderstanding of the hyphenation of syllables associated with words that have a consonant between two vowels (known as the intervocalic consonant by linguists).</p>			
2021				
Aug 23, 21	The Secrets of Schwa: Rising "above" in English proficiency	1000110	1	4
	<p>This report continues with our series on bilingual proficiency. We call attention to the two "compressible vowels" in English: the 'a' of "above" and the 'i' of "sit." The 'i' is squeezed out of "business" to give the pronunciation as "biznes." The other compressible vowel is called a "schwa," which may be represented by any of the English vowel letters. When the schwa occurs in the place of the natural stress of a word (usually the penultimate syllable), the stress shifts one syllable to the left. For the non-native speaker of English, the unexpected stressed syllable at, or near, the beginning of a word is likely evidence that a compressible vowel is pushing it left.</p>			
Jan 12, 21	Overcoming the American Accent in Spanish (Part 2)	100153.2	14	2
	<p>This report was first issued on Dec. 26, 2012, during the first month of the administration of Enrique Peña Nieto when it was foreseen that with an energy reform there would be a renewed interest in gaining bilingual proficiency in Spanish. The insight in the report is that it is difficult to "hear" Spanish exactly as it is spoken by a native speaker because of the filters (the expectations) of our native language. What is helpful is an appreciation of how linguists map the route and traps (vowels and consonants) between thought and speech. A study of this report is guaranteed to improve the student's aural and spoken proficiency in Spanish.</p>			



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2019				
Dec 02, 19	Language Proficiency of Engineers and Scientists: Challenges in Mexico's 4T The level of English proficiency of some new appointees in positions in the energy sector in Mexico have English proficiene as a challenge for professional advancement. This report regards language proficiency in its pronunciation as a matter of understanding the fluid dynamics of that language: How does a language create meaning from the movement and modulation of air in the vocal box and nasal cavities? The report introduces a systematic way to advance proficiency in English and Spanish.	10062	10	3
Jul 16, 19	Gaining proficiency in spoken English: Action items for native speakers of Spanish Market efficiency in Mexico's energy sector is strengthened by advances in bilingual proficiency of Mexican and international professionals. We periodically issue reports that offer technical tips for native speakers of English or Spanish. This report lists the essential points of difference between English and Spanish to which the non-native speaker must pay attention to gain proficiency in spoken English. Appended is a title list of prior reports. [This report was previously issued as Market Note 239.]	1000094	1	4
Jun 24, 19	Advancing English Proficiency: What is possible in 75 minutes? This report was originally prepared in 2016 in advance of a 75-minute workshop to be given at the Mexican consulate in Houston. The event was attended by about a dozen people, including the consul-general. The report covers basic concepts and vocabulary in linguistics that are needed for the mind to understand what to listen for in gaining English proficiency. For example, English speakers say "stop" and "state," not /es-top/ and /es-tate/, which is the common pronunciation among Spanish speakers. The appended title list of report on English proficiency goes back to the year 2002.	100219.1	6	3
2018				
Jun 13, 18	Adding the "E" of English to STEM: The core curriculum should be STEME This report was prompted by the disparity in conference presentations in Houston between speakers from Mexico, most of whom address the audience in English but some of whom continue to be delivered in Spanish. We note that no petroleum engineering program in Mexico is on the list of the 35 top-ranked worldwide. We speculate that the inadequate attention to English proficiency in the science curriculum is one of the explanations. In the report, we draw on the technical literature of linguistics to offer five tips for enhanced English proficiency.	10051	9	2



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2016				
Aug 18, 16	Advancing English Proficiency: What is possible in 75 minutes? This report is a preview of material to be presented at an introductory workshop on English proficiency at an agency of the Mexican federal government. The initial goal will be to convince attendees that they are not actually hearing English as spoken; instead, they are hearing English through the filter of their Spanish phonological expectations. A second goal will be to briefly present selected concepts in linguistics that illuminate previously-unnoticed aspects of English pronunciation. A third goal will be to motivate participants to undertake a new effort to advance their proficiency in English.	100219	9	3
2015				
Apr 30, 15	Overcoming the Mexican Accent in English (Part IV) Mexico's first bid round presents not only legal and commercial challenges for Mexican authorities, academics and business people, but also phonological ones. It turns out that "bid" is a difficult word for native Spanish speakers to pronounce correctly. How so? The vowel of "bid" does not exist in Spanish. This report, drawing on earlier reports on applied linguistic theory, offers guidance on how to pronounce just five words: bid, law, knowledge, regulatory and Paula. The explanations are presented in greater detail in our Advanced English Proficiency Workshop.	100205	6	4
2014				
Aug 21, 14	Petróleos Mexicanos vs. the English Language: Incorporating the new vocabulary of the 2014 Energy Reform This updated report of March 26, 2010, examines the principal terms used in the energy sector of Mexico and provides suggestions for standard English translations of some 20 common terms used in Mexican government and energy circles. Most of these terms cannot receive a direct, literal translation. This update (No. 9) begins the process of identifying and translating the new vocabulary of the 2014 Energy Reform.	100032	10	0
Feb 03, 14	Mexico City English in Houston: The Dialect of Energy Reformese This report builds on earlier reports on Mexico's energy reform and on English as a second language. These two topics came together in seminars in Houston in January, 2104, on the topic of Mexican energy reform. Speakers from Mexico presented their views of the purpose and desired outcomes of energy reform. The panelists did not agree on core issues: One panelist argued that the purpose of Round Zero was to strengthen Mexico's NOC, and that it should be exclusively responsible for the selection of third parties without the interference of CNH or SENER. The report also touches on matters of linguistics.	100181	6	3



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2013				
May 20, 13	Overcoming the Mexican Accent in English (Part III)	100163	10	3
	<p>This report is a continuation of our reporting on how to increase the proficiency of second-language energy professionals in English. The present report focuses on the matter of the stress of multi-syllable words and phrases. The report gives practical advice as to how to figure out the stressed syllable in any given two- or three syllable word. For this, elements of linguistic theory are provided as tools. Applying these tools, you can understand the stress in words such as “probable,” “about,” “accent,” “access” and “assess.” (stresss in bold).</p>			
2012				
Feb 16, 12	Overcoming the Mexican Accent in English (Part II)	100117	13	6
	<p>This report builds on Market Note 109, which presents the basic concepts of linguistics that are needed to have a clear understanding of the challenges that face the native Spanish speaker who is already competent in English. In this report we focus on the "enemies within" that make it difficult to listen to the ways that English is actually spoken.</p>			
2011				
Nov 22, 11	Overcoming the Mexican Accent in English (Part I)	100109	23	6
	<p>This report examines, with the aid of linguistics, the differences in the phonological systems of English and Spanish. By this route the native Spanish speaker comes to see the linguistic baggage that he will automatically want to bring with him as he crosses the border into English. The report describes the most common Mexican accent in English, and offers a long-term vision for achieving English mastery. The report will also be useful for the native English speaker who wants to go beyond basic competency in Spanish.</p>			
2006				
Jun 26, 06	English, culture and leadership in Mexico's oil sector, 2006-12	711	17	1
	<p>This report identifies, as key issues for the new government, the topics of English, culture and leadership in Mexico's petroleum industry. The report discusses little-examined features of Mexico's oil sector that have limited the ability of the state oil company to keep abreast technologically, replace reserves and operate in deepwater. The report suggests ideas for requirements to be used in executive recruitment in the oil sector.</p>			



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2003				
Mar 07, 03	Why can't Mexico communicate in English? This report offers reflections on the closing on December 31, 2002, of two Mexico City newspapers, <i>Novedades</i> and <i>The News</i> . In the case of <i>The News</i> , its political function was to promote Mexico's image to English-speaking tourists and business visitors.	622	6	1
2002				
Dec 26, 02	Blunders, faux pas and booby traps in English-Mexican Spanish translation This report notes difficulties both sides have with the problem of false cognates in translating from Mexican Spanish into English and from English into Mexican Spanish. Consider the adequacy of "subsidiary organism" as an English translation of <i>organismo subsidiario</i> . In some cases, translation errors may pass into blunders of strategy or public relations.	620	6	1